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THE
# Commonweal

## The Private Conscience and Legitimate Authority

*GORDON C. ZAHN*

GNOSTICS AT THE GARDEN • THE CHURCH'S LASTING VICTORIES
TWO POEMS: LENTEN JOY AND SIXTEENTH AUTUMN OF THE BOMB
ERICH FROMM'S NEW ACT OF FAITH • RICHARD HUGHES' GERMAN
NIGHTMARE • "A GIFT OF TIME" AND INGMAR BERGMAN'S LATEST

VOLUME LXXVI, NO. 1 MARCH 30, 1962 TWENTY-FIVE CENTS

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## Spring Prospect

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# *Correspondence*

*SHORTER HISTORY, ETC.*

Lindenhurst, N.Y.

TO THE EDITORS: In reply to Robert Lax's poem, "Shorter History of Western Civilization" [Feb. 16]:

*Shorter*
*Poll of*
*Popular*
*Culture*

Life
Time
Newsweek

Life
Time
Newsweek

The New Republic
The Nation

The New Republic
The Nation

Life
Time
Newsweek

Life
Time
Newsweek

The New Republic
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Ugh
Ugh
Ugh

DENIS T. THOMPSON

Lakemont-on-Seneca, N.Y.

TO THE EDITORS: Regarding Robert Lax's poem, "Shorter History of Western Civilization" [Feb. 16]:

*Shorter*
*History*
*of Western*
*Poetry*

Homer
Virgil
Dante

Homer
Virgil
Dante

Keats &
Shelley

Keats &
Shelley

Homer
Virgil
Dante

Homer
Virgil
Dante

Keats &
Shelley

Keats &
Shelley

Eliot
Eliot
Eliot

Eliot
Eliot
Eliot

Eliot
Eliot
Eliot

Lax
Lax
Lax

GREGOR ROY

*LITURGY AND REUNION*

Paris

TO THE EDITORS: About Father H. A. Reinhold's article, "Liturgy and Reunion" [January 5]. I can't help telling you how good his views seem to me.

I have heard so many times, so many American Catholics (here or in the States) express their disappointment before the "indolent congregations" (as Father Reinhold calls them) of too many American parishes. More or less, their remarks sounded like the quotation in the article: "What does the priest do

(*Continued on Page* 23)

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# THE COMMONWEAL

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, LITERATURE AND THE ARTS

## Obstacle to Communication

FRUSTRATING as it is at times, there are occasions when Americans can be thankful that the process of enacting bills into law often is so cumbersome. It is two months since the House of Representatives passed the Postage Revision Act (H.R. 7927), and hearings before the Senate Post Office and Civil Service Committee have barely begun. There is time to make known certain of the intended legislation's glaring deficiencies.

The objectives of the House in this matter were responsible enough if not wholly beyond debate: to reduce or eliminate the annual deficits incurred by the Post Office Department. More specifically, adoption of H.R. 7927 was expected to provide $691,000,000 in additional postal revenues. And this sum was to come from two sources, newspapers and magazines with second-class mailing privileges and enterprises that utilize third-class for direct-mail promotion.

One thing that seemed appealing about the bill was its deceptive simplicity. The Post Office would simply charge an extra penny for every copy of a magazine or newspaper mailed to a destination outside the county in which it was issued, while third-class mail would be raised a penny.

As these increases are intended to apply to the widest spectrum of users of the mails, the effects would vary widely. In the publication field, where the mortality is high even for mass circulation media, there are especially striking variations. Some of the largest have their own distribution systems and a number utilize the newsstands for the bulk of their sales. For such enterprises the projected Post Office increases would hardly tend to be catastrophic. Quite the reverse is true for small-town newspapers and hundreds of magazines that depend on the mails for distribution to their subscribers.

Under its present billing system the Post Office distinguishes in rates between editorial and advertising matter and also charges postage according t weight. The increase that is now being propose would ignore these distinctions, with the smalle publication without advertising facing the same su charge as the bulkiest magazine crammed wit profitable advertising.

H. R. 7927's proposed penny rise in third-cla mail rates would also bear down heavily o smaller publications, which are dependent on d rect-mail solicitation for reaching their subscribe and enough prospective readers to maintain an increase their vital circulation. When the highe cost of essential promotion is added to the contem plated rise in distribution charges, the cumulativ effect is damaging in the extreme.

AS intimated previously, magazine publishing i anything but a highly lucrative enterprise unde present postal rates. In 1960, which was regarde as a good year in the industry, thirty-five of th largest magazine enterprises made a net profit o only 1.7 per cent. Many smaller ventures conside that they do well if they succeed in breaking even the more serious and still smaller American journal of opinion consistently operate at a loss.

This is unmistakably true of The Commonweal Increased mailing costs of some fifteen thousan dollars a year resulting from the adoption of thi Postage Revision Act would enlarge this magazine' annual deficit to unmanageable proportions. Fo other journals in the field the effect would be com parable—many periodicals would be pushed to th wall.

Happily, even before the Senate committee hear ings on magazines started, Senators Olin D. Johns ton and Frank Carlson declared they were aware o this aspect of the problem and indicated that they are opposed to the penny delivery surcharge. Do they have in mind a viable substitute?

The problem before the House and Senate is much broader than that of finding simple means of



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tting down the annual Post Office deficit. The cond-class mail category was set up by Congress ghty years ago in order to encourage the dissem- ation of fact and opinion, with a view to develop- g an enlightened citizenry in this political de- ocracy. Is there any denying that there is more, ther than less, need of popular enlightenment ow?

In these days of national and world crisis involv- g global cold war and thermonuclear weapons with the public press in many of our larger cities duced to a single newspaper—it is hardly the part wisdom for the sake of budget-balancing to eate obstacles to the formulation and dissemina- on of responsible opinion. At a time when public ecisions can be so fateful, divergent points of view ould be assured of a hearing and reasoned protest ue consideration. That is one of the incalculable enefits of our cherished freedom of the press.

H.R. 7927 obviously needs to be amended. And hen Congress comes to consider a new bill in its nal form, the national interest demands that both louse and Senate weigh it for its effect on the de- elopment of responsible opinion in this nation.

## Congress, Arms and the Man

REGARDLESS of whether the B-70 bomber ever ets off the ground and into the air, it has stirred up nough bickering and domestic in-fighting to en- ure its place in American military history. It is battle which has been joined from many sides: he business community has urged the plane for ome thinly-veiled economic reasons; the Air Force as sought it to keep alive the future of manned ircraft; the House Armed Services Committee sees as a test case of Congressional prerogatives in he area of national defense; and the present and ast Administrations have resisted the full-scale pro- luction of the plane on military and economic grounds, thereby arousing ire from many directions t once.

Until recently, however, the battle had been con- lucted along old familiar lines: the business pres- ure was discreet, the Air Force's publicity cam- paign of a standard kind, and Congressional an- noyance at authorized but unspent funds tactfully gnored. But the decision of Representative Carl Vinson, Chairman of the Armed Services Commit- ee, to bring about a showdown on the power of Congress to authorize military expenditures has changed the complexion of the affair. By voting to "direct" the President to spend an additional 310 million dollars for development of the B-70, the Committee hopes to force the Administration,



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whether it likes it or not, to spend defense money as Congress sees fit. At this moment it appears that, in a vote due shortly, Congress will support the Committee.

While it was unlikely that Congress would resist forever the practice of recent Administrations in not spending some authorized funds, it is unfortunate that the B-70 affair has been chosen for a test of strength. From the first, with the exception of the Air Force, the Department of Defense's interest in the plane has been faint. The reasons for its persistent disinterest are many: strong doubts about the offensive value of the plane in comparison with missiles, ground vulnerability of the plane from surprise attack, air vulnerability from ground or air-to-air missiles, and the excessive expense of developing and producing the plane in quantity.

Nor has a recent Air Force proposal that the plane be developed as a "reconnaissance-strike" version made it any more attractive to the Department of Defense. As Secretary McNamara pointed out in his recent public statement, there is considerable uncertainty whether the advanced radar equipment necessary to make the plane feasible for reconnaissance purposes can even be developed in the near future, if ever. Moreover, he argued that the plane would, within five years, be obsolete. Not to be outdone on the technical questions, Mr. Vinson has rebutted the Secretary by arguing that the fact that this country does not have the necessary equipment for the plane is the "very reason that we need the larger program for the B-70."

At best, Mr. Vinson's argument is a doubtful one, leaving entirely untouched the question of whether the B-70 program provides the best, much less the only, way of developing some new equipment. One can, of course, grant Mr. Vinson the plausibility of his additional claim that increased B-70 funds would hasten the development of the plane and make obsolescence less of a problem. Yet the question still remains whether the money could be used in ways of more certain long-range value.

What seems evident, however, is that Mr. Vinson is less interested in the technical and defense questions than he is in the principle involved. This is not to suggest that he does not believe fully in the value of a more rapid development of the B-70. But even more, it appears, he is intent on resolving, once and for all, the powers of Congress to have a decisive voice in defense matters. And it may possibly be that his constitutional argument is a viable one. In addition, apart from the constitutional question, he has the privilege of resisting Executive dismissal of Congressional wishes.

Despite all the reasons which can be advanced to support his firm stand, we think Mr. Vinson has chosen a poor issue on which to do battle. Wh there may be flaws in Mr. McNamara's case, seems to us that it is considerably stronger than t one advanced by the Air Force. More pertinent st is the fact that the first prototype of the plane w not be completed until December; until some kir of practical evaluation of its capabilities can be u dertaken, it remains of unknown value. Mr. M Namara's plea that, at the very least, the plane capabilities and possibilities be explored furth before committing more money to it is hard to di miss. In a situation in which both sides argue on t basis of speculative projections into the future, M McNamara's course appears the wiser one.

## Prescription for the Hospitals

SHOULD HOSPITAL workers be permitted to er gage in collective bargaining? Or, to put the que tion in more dramatic but no less accurate term should hospitals be exempt from the federal an state laws which require other employers to pay minimum wage, maintain decent working condi tions and recognize legitimate employees' organiza tions for purposes of collective bargaining?

We are convinced, on every count, that hospital should not be exempted from state fair labor laws We are convinced that the present exemption i unjust and abusive, that it denies hospital worker a fundamental right, that it leads not only to the exploitation of the workers involved but to evi consequences for the hospitals themselves, for thei patients and for society at large. We strongly urge the New York Legislature to pass into law the pend ing bills which would grant hospital workers the rights and protection enjoyed by other citizens.

Spokesmen for the hospitals maintain that their institutions should be exempt from fair labor laws because they are charitable organizations. This is an obvious illogicality, in the first place because many other kinds of charitable institutions are not exempted from such labor laws, but more fundamentally because the employees of a charitable institution are not voluntary donors of their time and labor. They are workers, seeking through their wages to maintain themselves and their families in decency. They have a right to a decent wage and to the freedom of deciding, as others do, what and how they will give to charity.

The second argument of the hospitals is simply that they cannot afford to pay the higher wages which collective bargaining would bring. What this amounts to, it seems to us, is an attempt to justify the exploitation of workers in the name of a noble end. If many hospitals today are already in finan-



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al straits, which is true, and if the cost of hospital ıre is already so high that patients need some kind subsidy to help pay for this care, which is also ue, it nevertheless does not follow that this subsidy ıould be supplied by one small segment of the )mmunity, namely, the unfortunate workers who ·e least able to carry such a burden. This has been ıe case up to now, but it is a monstrous perver-on of any conception of social justice.

Another argument against recognizing hospital 'orkers' right to collective bargaining is that such step would lead to strikes, slowdowns and inter-erence with hospital procedures. The easiest reply ) these charges is that the record of labor-manage-ıent relations both in and out of hospitals indi-ates quite the opposite. The recognition of nurses', echnicians' and other professional workers' organ-zations in hospitals has not led to these dire con-equences at all. In the case of the New York hos-itals, it seems clear that the denial of orderly ıeans of negotiation left the workers with no re-ourse whatsoever except to strike. It was, there-ore, not the presence of unions so much as their bsence which made the strike a necessity for the vorkers. In any case, a compulsory arbitration clause easily meets the fear of strikes, and much nore effectively than non-recognition of a union.

We do not lightly countenance a hospital strike; we do not deny that many of our hospitals are in urgent need of financial assistance; but the exemption of hospitals from state labor laws is not a just or proper solution to the problem. We think it is important that this exemption be removed, for the sake of the workers involved, but also for the sake of the hospitals and the communities which need them so badly.

## The Female of the Species

IF THE battle over medical care for the aged has been a grim affair up to now, it can be expected soon to turn downright vicious. We base this unhappy prediction on various reports of formidable-sounding pressure-groups girding themselves to meet the hated foe, the most formidable of which by far must be a platoon of doctors' wives.

The lobbying tactics of the American Medical Association have never been particularly subtle, but the bland pronouncements of the medical wives —banded together in a new A.M.A. political-action group—make their husbands' arguments appear mild and conciliatory by comparison. In the eyes of the ladies the objective is quite simple: "battling the socializers" and helping "those who vote and practice Americanism." See?

# The Commonweal As Pontius Pilate?

THE *Catholic Messenger* of Davenport, Iowa, once set the pace among diocesan papers. About ten years ago, with notable success, it broke out of the usual pattern and put into effect Jacques Maritain's philosophy of Catholic journalism, establishing a standard for excellence that only a few other papers have since achieved. Over the years the *Messenger* has picked up a grateful national circulation by publishing the text of papal statements, significant pastoral letters, the basic thought of leading philosophers and theologians, and a consistently literate discussion of books, music, art, and contemporary culture. When the history of American Catholic journalism is written, the page given to Davenport, Iowa, will have to be starred.

It is dismaying, then, to report that an article which may be among the most confused and confusing ever to appear in the diocesan press recently turned up in the *Messenger*. The article was entitled "The Bishops Si; The Commonweal No." It was written by a *Messenger* columnist, a home-grown philosopher named Martin L. Duggan. All I know about Mr. Duggan is what I read in the papers, in his own column to be precise, and in the recent one that caught my eye he informed his readers that "it is no secret that my entire education has been in Catholic schools." Then, unaccountably, he added that he was grateful for this, "not ashamed of it."

Mr. Duggan, after setting forth these credentials, took issue with a recent editorial in The Commonweal. That editorial, called "Federal Aid: Second Round," was interpreted by him as an "attack" on "the successors to the Apostles."

This "attack," Commonweal readers will remember, took the form of recalling that throughout the days of President Kennedy's campaign, he frequently expressed the belief that federal aid to parochial schools would be unconstitutional. At the time the candidate was making these statements, there was no outcry from the American Bishops that he was planning to run roughshod over the rights of Catholic children. In view of this, The Commonweal argued, "if the average American had been asked, before last year, about the position of the American hierarchy on federal aid to schools, he would probably have guessed that they were against it, and not even thought of aid to church-related schools."

This impression, thought The Commonweal, explained much of the resentment of the Bishops' statement last



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year, especially with its concluding warning that "they would do all in their power to block any school aid program if parochial schools were not included in it." And, in speaking for the Catholic community, the Bishops "cast themselves as a minority pressure-group, trying to win special legislation by strategic, balance-of-power influence on legislation involving the general welfare."

Pressure-group tactics of this kind, The Commonweal editorialized, are normal and ethical in a democracy but "in the special case of religion" the editors could not agree that "participation in power politics is either fitting or in the long run effective." Further, the recent emotional descriptions by Catholic leaders of the President's bill as a "threat, a crime, an attack which means the end of the parochial school system are misleading and exaggerated, and are likely to do much harm," for they give practical assurance that the bill will again fail and that an urgent national need will once again go unmet.

Finally, violent pronouncements of this kind "will reinforce the image of the Church as nothing more than another power-bloc" and delay the time when the issues of justice involved in the school question can be disentangled from suspicion of the hierarchy and be resolved amicably in an atmosphere of mutual trust.

THE COMMONWEAL's argument may have had its flaws, but it was a serious, responsible treatment made by a publication that has supported across-the-board aid to education all along. Mr. Duggan did not even attempt to meet it. Instead he reacted as if the editorial had been the joint work of Martin Luther, Archbishop Cranmer, and Dr. Paul Blanshard. In his third paragraph, for instance, he burst into a declaration of orthodoxy that in a less blessed place than the columns of a diocesan newspaper might well call for heroism of a high order but coming as abruptly as it did was almost as startling as it was edifying.

"I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth," Mr. Duggan began, "and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord . . ." and, so help me, right on through to the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. He raced along then, like a careless catechist, to instruct the readers of the *Messenger* in the knowledge that their Bishops are the successors of the Apostles, adding that no matter how others may wander, he for one believes what they say. "The Bishops," he said, "are holy men, inspired by God Himself to do what is right and say what is right in matters pertaining to the preservation of the faith and the salvation of souls." In doing their work they "are accountable to God, and no one else other than their chief shepherd, the Holy Father." "If The Commonweal is not with the Bishops, it is against them."

In an outpouring of humility as stunning as these confessions of faith, Mr. Duggan went on to suggest that if his faith is childlike, he likes to believe the reaso is "because I am working at it, not because I am simpl minded." Every day, he confided, he prays that God wi make him more like a little child.

There was more of the same, ending on the theologic note heard throughout but with the decidedly grow up charge that "The Commonweal is a Pontius Pilat willing to wash its hands of all American children, whil pretending to be the great and true friend of education.

Clearly, Mr. Duggan's daily prayer has been so we answered that he is unlikely to become engaged serious ly in the kind of mundane controversy that regularl flares up in these pages. In fact he may be so busy say ing his prayers in public that one would hesitate to re call him to the issues. But the diocesan papers, and th *Catholic Messenger* especially, can surely do better tha this in setting down the relationship between the truth of Faith and the political prudence required in a healthy democracy. Surely a better defense of the Bishops' ac tion can be made than this blurring of their God-give authority and the political wisdom, or lack of wisdom in their NCWC tactics. Don't the readers of the *Catholi Messenger* deserve better than to be left with the im pression that the special graces that go with episcopa consecration lend an added weight to a Bishop's inter pretation of the Constitution of the United States?

In one of his declaratory passages Mr. Duggan stated: "I believe what I have been taught by my parents and by the Sisters, Brothers, and priests who educated me in grade school, high school, and college." The line could have come from the pages of *Tom Playfair*, but Mr. Duggan is a big boy now. Someone should straighten him out. Someone should break it to him gently that throughout history the very best mothers and fathers, Brothers, Sisters, priests and even bishops have made, and will probably continue to make, astounding errors of political judgment. Someone should inform him that a position on the constitutionality of aid to parochial schools is several removes from the certitudes of the Apostles' Creed. Mr. Duggan won't be utterly shattered, will he, to learn that even among the successors to the Apostles there are those who do not share his wholesale approval of the way the controversy has been handled to date?

Above all, someone should instruct Mr. Duggan on how a grown man can have a child-like faith without being childish. If he keeps on the way he is going, he will soon be concluding that whatever a President of the United States or Justice of the Supreme Court tells him is just as unerring as the pronouncements of the nun who taught him in fifth grade. That would be confusing, wouldn't it? . . . But, as Mr. Duggan might say at a time like this, let us pray. JOHN COGLEY

*(Mr. Cogley, formerly an editor of The Commonweal, is now a member of the Fund for the Republic's Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions.)*



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# This Is Anti-Communism?

A WEEK or two ago, a Catholic high school here in the East carried out one of those "real-life" demonstrations of how Communists operate. It made quite a story in the papers, and I imagine the school authorities considered it a great success. I do not.

As usual in these affairs, a group of students pretending to be Communists "seized control" of the school. Thereupon they promptly removed the American flag, took down crucifixes and filled the library with Communist propaganda. They barred the usual morning prayer and used the public address system to broadcast propaganda instead. Three pupils were charged with being anti-Communists, given a mock trial and "executed."

The purpose of the demonstration, according to the school's principal, was "to show the students how the Communists infiltrate an institution and use persuasion and secretly gather information to try to sway the masses to their ideology." I don't doubt that all this made for an interesting break in school routine, and I am sure the students loved every minute of it. To me, though, this kind of make-believe is like so much that passes for anti-Communism in some Catholic circles: full of drama, but with little relevance to the real world.

This is not to say, of course, that if the Communists were in control they would not take crucifixes off the walls or seize power by staging a coup if they could. But instruction in these matters ought to be related to the situation in which students find themselves, and I don't see that demonstrations like this do anything but mislead students on the problem we face.

Communism poses both an internal and an external threat. If a nation's political institutions are unstable and popular discontent is ready to explode at any time, the internal threat may be the more pressing, and half a dozen Latin American countries would have to be put in this category today. But to suggest that this is the case in the United States is nonsense.

No matter what impression demonstrations like this give students, the danger is not that American Communists will seize the White House tomorrow or take over the Congress by force—any more than they are going to march in and snatch the crucifixes off the walls of Catholic schools. If we let down our guard, there is always danger of Communist infiltration into sensitive governmental and defense positions, and for this reason the F.B.I. and various security agencies have to be alert. But the major Communist threat to the United States is not internal but external.

There was a time, of course, when Communism posed more of an internal problem than it does today. Until the shock of the cold war, some Americans were overly casual, and as a result the Communists had far too much influence in American life, particularly in labor and liberal circles. But even in those days much Catholic anti-Communism was no more effective or realistic than that of the high school demonstration.

Take, for example, the labor movement before World War II—a prime Communist target. Zealous labor priests and dedicated laymen put the encyclicals into practice and achieved results in this field all out of proportion to their numbers, but altogether too many Catholics remained completely aloof from the battle. They were largely unacquainted with Catholic social thought and regarded the C.I.O. as "too radical" to join. They abstained from the struggle, and as a result all that was done, including the ultimate expulsion of the Communists, was done in spite of them and not because of them.

Or take the race question. For years the Communists made interracial justice a major propaganda theme, and the party must have thrown hundreds of thousands of dollars into this effort to win a substantial Negro following. Thanks to the good sense and patriotism of the American Negro, the Communist effort failed miserably. But again I fear that Catholic anti-Communism cannot take much credit for this crucial Communist setback. Catholic ventures like the Catholic Interracial Councils and Friendship Houses bore witness to Catholic teaching on the race question, but they were regarded as "radical" ventures by conservative Catholics and had to struggle along on pennies at a time when the Communists were spending thousands.

All this is in the past now, and presumably we have learned our lesson. Have we, though? Communists can infiltrate and take over worthwhile efforts only when other Americans fail to participate. The obvious question, then is: are Catholic schools recognized, not for their "real-life" anti-Communist demonstrations, but for their great contributions to struggles for justice like the Freedom Rides? I think not. Are Catholics in the lead in urging that we keep our non-nuclear capability high so Communist aggression can be resisted without resort to total thermonuclear war? I think not. Are Catholics famous for their support of the United Nations and of massive financial assistance to the underdeveloped countries? Again I fear not.

These are, I know, only a few examples. But I hope they serve to illustrate my point, which is that dramatic demonstrations of "how the Communists take over" are likely to tell us more about the mentality of those who plan them than they do about the Communist threat.

JAMES O'GARA



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GORDON C. ZAHN

# The Private Conscience and Legitimate Authority

IT IS now almost seventeen years since Dwight Macdonald opened a lively discussion of the subject of "collective guilt" in the pages of his short-lived but always exciting periodical *Politics*. World War II was then fast approaching its end in the total defeat of the Nazi "Thousand Year Reich," and the question of the form the peace would take was already engaging the attention of the intellectual and political leaders of the Allied world. The prevailing tone was clearly one of stern vindictiveness. The so-called Morgenthau Plan and its insistent supporters proposed to reduce the defeated Germany to the permanent status of a pastoral nation, forbidden ever again to develop an industrial potential; popular writers like Rex Stout carried the punish-the-Teutonic-beast line into even more drastic expression. It was the moment before the "unconditional surrender," the prize that had cost so much in blood and sacrifice. In a sense, the expectation of a thoroughly Carthaginian peace was a logical extension of the thinking that had given rise to so questionable a military goal.

To Macdonald's credit, he had the courage to raise his voice in protest against the nonsense with which these vicious proposals were clothed, the thesis that Germans *as a people* were collectively responsible for the atrocities perpetrated by the Nazi regime. It would be overstating the case to give him credit for the ultimate abandonment of this thesis and the conclusions that had been drawn from it and had received respectful hearing and even support from people who would be ashamed to admit it today. Those who read his provocative essays were few; and not all of them were willing to agree with him—a fact amply demonstrated by the letters published by him in subsequent issues of the magazine.

As it turned out, however, the vindictive "responsibility of the whole German people" thesis—though it did play some part in the early stages of the Occupation, especially in the somewhat indiscriminate "de-Nazification" and overly strict "nonfraternization" policies—was not accepted on any long-term basis. It was reflected, perhaps, in the tone if not in the formal proceedings of the Nuremberg Trials; but whatever other criticisms may be made of them, the judgments passed there were directed against individuals and not against any national collectivity.

Maybe it was an understandable reaction to the early excesses, but by some irony of fate later events and changes in attitudes have since brought us to the point where the "responsibility of peoples" issue has been reversed and turned inside out. Instead of demanding that all Germans be forced to accept the responsibility (and pay the penalty) for the Nazi actions, the prevailing idea today—and, indeed, for some time now—is that *no* Germans (other than Hitler, of course, and the others sentenced to death by the victor court at Nuremberg) should be held responsible for them; that, moreover, it is in bad taste to suggest that the individual Germans who served Hitler in any capacity can, or should, be criticized for that fact.

THIS NEW formulation, I submit, is just as wrong, and probably even more dangerous, than the old. The "responsibility of peoples" issue of 1945 was based on a kind of retaliatory racism and would ultimately have lost the support of reasonable men. The new formulation, however, is based on something that appears far more respectable in essence and, therefore, less likely to disappear of its own accord; I refer to the exaggerated notion it incorporates of the proper scope of state authority and the quality of obedience to be required of the individual citizen.

The whole issue has found its clearest statement in the defense of Adolf Eichmann and, in particular, in his statement to the court after it announced its verdict: "I did not *will* the murder of human beings. This mass slaughter is *solely* the responsibility of the political leaders. *My guilt lies in my obedience*. . .Obedience is praised as a virtue, and *I would therefore request that my having obeyed be the sole fact that is taken into account.*" The words and phrases given emphasis represent the essential points in the general defense that has been advanced *and accepted* far too lightly and in

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far too many instances involving direct and active complicity in Nazi programs and policies.

In Eichmann's case, no doubt, the offenses with which he is charged are so gross that it is unthinkable that they can be covered by the mantle of "virtuous action." Nevertheless, it is quite obvious that the defense has impressed many to the point of wishing that the trial had not taken place, that (as at least one Catholic diocesan paper has suggested) this whole sorry business of the Nazi period and its attendant atrocities should be laid to rest once and for all so that we can concentrate all of our energy (and, presumably, animosity) upon the current evils being perpetrated by the Soviet Union.

OTHERS ARE faring better than Eichmann. The recent diplomatic flurry over Soviet demands that General Heusinger be turned over to them for trial as a war criminal is a case in point. Here is a man who served as master planner for Hitler's military aggressions and who did his work remarkably well, it would seem. The obvious insincerity of the Soviet move aside, one must grant that, if Hitler's wars were unjust and "a crime against humanity" (as was maintained at Nuremberg), there is some objective merit in the Soviet charges. Yet not only has the General's slate been wiped clean, but he has been installed in one of the most responsible posts in the NATO military establishment. The attempt to build him up as one of the generals in the plot against Hitler is not at all convincing. The standard histories of the Resistance offer no evidence of his involvement; and this is significant in view of the fact that the plotters apparently tried to approach every top-ranking military man who gave even the slightest sign of readiness to turn against the *Führer*.

Nor is the fact that General Heusinger was sent into punitive retirement by Hitler evidence of such involvement. Had there been any basis for suspecting complicity in the plot, Heusinger would undoubtedly have shared the far more serious penalties meted out to the other conspirators. Under the circumstances, the best explanation for the clean slate he now boasts is that he has been cleared of responsibility for his actions and their consequences, that his only "guilt" was felt to lie in his obedience to his superiors.

The case of Dr. Globke, State Secretary to Chancellor Adenauer, is also relevant to this discussion. His major contribution to the Third Reich was his work in connection with the codification of the infamous Nuremberg racial legislation—which legislation, be it remembered, had more than a passing importance for the program of harassment and persecution of Jews that was to culminate in the "Final Solution" for which Eichmann has now been sentenced to death. The Chancellor's political opponents have long, and unsuccessfully, protested Globke's position of prominence and influence; the protests have consistently been turned back on the grounds that the work he did was not willed by him but by his political superiors. His defenders go further and insist that, had Globke not done the job he did, someone else would have taken his place. Thus not only is he not to be held responsible for his work on the racial laws, but he is to be thanked for keeping some more fanatic Nazi out of that important post.

There is no intent here to stir old embers into flame or to suggest that these men, and the others all along the line who directly and actively supported the Nazi regime out of too automatic or too extensive a spirit of obedience, should now be called to account and punished. The Soviet demands concerning Heusinger clearly would serve no purpose but propaganda and reprisal and, in the process, would cloud the really important issue that must be faced. The same objection can be raised even against the Eichmann trial; for by focusing attention upon this man and convicting him of the horrors of the extermination camps, we lose sight of the far more vital question of the frame of mind—and the ethical and theological principles which have produced and which maintain it—which permits any individual to rationalize his personal conformity and even participation in unjust actions or regimes.

IN A moving essay on "Auschwitz, Hiroshima, and the Hopes of Man," Christian Geissler strips this question to its bare essentials. Horrible as the totals were, he insists that the real horror of the extermination camp is not to be read in the calculations of how many people were burned by other people over how long a period of time in how many ovens operating for how many hours each day. These factual data become insignificant when matched with the other facts that human beings designed those ovens for the specified purpose; that, again with full knowledge, business men contracted to produce and deliver the poison gas; that workmen, with full knowledge of what they were doing, constructed the ovens; that doctors, with full knowledge, selected the victims; that locomotive engineers drove the transports to their destination; that soldiers guarded these trains—and all with knowledge of what was going on.

Then, as his title indicates, Geissler parallels this charge with an indictment of all who knowingly participated in or contributed to the atrocities at Hiroshima

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and Nagasaki. What Auschwitz and Hiroshima have in common, he feels, is the proof they offer of a frightful human capacity for "justified" inhumanity. "Any mind which can formulate justifications for the wholesale liquidation of men, that mind is corrupt," he declares—and he immediately adds his dismal, but probably accurate, conclusion: "This corruption is general."

Geissler's solution, in which the "hopes of men" are seen to lie, is a restoration of the ideal of individual responsibility, under which the demand is made of every individual that he renounce for himself (and reject for others) the easy loopholes that have served so well in the past: the escape through the formal justification of the substantially unjustifiable, the escape into a sense of resignation and hopelessness, the escape into a rationalization in terms of the more exalted ideals of duty and sacrifice. In short, he would restate the "responsibility of peoples," not in the sense that whole collectivities are to be punished for the evil programs pursued by their leaders, but rather, in the sense that all the individual persons who comprise these "peoples" can and must be held responsible for their own contributions to the success of those programs and leaders.

Certainly such a restatement of individual responsibility need not—and should not—fail to allow for the operation of human weakness and the effect of outside pressures and controls; but such allowance must never be permitted to extend to the point where explanation and understanding become confused with excuse and justification. Such a new approach would be as far removed from the assumption of blanket guilt that stirred Dwight Macdonald to protest as it is from the current tendency to accept whatever was done as nothing other than the innocent, even virtuous, obedience to authority.

Not many Americans (and very few Catholics) are prepared to accept the full implications of this admittedly more rigid definition of the responsibilities of the individual citizen. For one thing, it is generally accepted that the individual is helpless before the power of the state and, therefore, cannot be held responsible for its decisions. Every now and then someone will break the pattern and reap a harvest of notoriety for his pains, whether as a newsworthy curiosity or, if the matter is more serious, as a dangerous radical.

The New York *Times*, for example, recently reported the refusal of a West Coast Republican attorney to sign a required state loyalty oath on the grounds that he might thereby be committing himself in advance to support a regime of the extreme left (or right) which might conceivably come to power and which he would consider himself bound in conscience to oppose. This is a most interesting case, especially when one considers the number of Germans who refused to join any resistance activities because of the oath of allegiance they had taken to Hitler and his regime. But it is safe to say that the principle behind such a stand will be lost on most readers, who merely note the accounts of such deviations from the norm with an amused chuckle (or, perhaps, a snort of patriotic indignation), turn the page, and quickly put such "crackpot" ideas safely out of mind and memory.

SUCH INDIFFERENCE or scorn would be buttressed by a recourse to the traditional theological definitions of the citizen-ruler relationship. Since all authority originates in God, the authority of the secular superior is divinized to the point that a civil ruler can command the obedience of the Christian citizen as a *moral* obligation. (This does not hold, of course, when the act commanded is certainly immoral; but, here too, by allowing for "the limited access to facts" and granting "the presumption of justice" to the state where doubt is present, the theologian provides a convenient "out.") Is the citizen troubled by the form of government or by the obviously irreligious or actually anti-religious behavior of its leaders? Then let him remember that all forms of government are morally indifferent and that the sinfulness of the evil ruler does not free the citizen from his obligation to render obedience. (Unless, of course, there is a direct attempt on the part of the state to interfere with the rights or operations of the Church; interestingly enough, these teachings do not usually permit the same flexibility of application in favor of the ruler that obtains above.) The dice are always loaded in favor of "legitimate authority," and the individual Christian can always take comfort in the assurance that whatever actions he performs out of obedience in good faith will be viewed as meritorious and any evil they may involve will be charged against those who gave him the orders.

This obviously drastically condensed statement of the traditional moral teachings dealing with the nature and scope of civil responsibility and obedience will, I think, be supported by the standard moral guidance handbooks. That it has served, and still serves, as an active guide to individual behavior is clearly illustrated by the support given by Catholics to Hitler's wars and by the indignant reaction to any implied or direct suggestion that such support should not have been given. There is no intent to cover this particular controversy here, but one specific example of how it applies to the point in question might be offered.

In 1943 an Austrian peasant was beheaded in Berlin for his refusal to serve in a war that he, as a Catholic, believed to be unjust. While still contemplating the prospect of such a refusal and its certain consequences, he had sought moral guidance from local priests to whom he often turned for spiritual direction and, finally, to his bishop. After his arrest he was attended by a succession of chaplains serving the various prisons in which he was held pending trial and execution. All gave him the same advice—and it followed the pattern



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summarized above. He was to quiet his doubts; he was to remember that he was not responsible for the actions of the secular ruler; he had no basis on which to reach a judgment as to the justice or injustice of the war; his only responsibility was to live up to his obligations as husband and father and as loyal citizen.

Even more significant, however, is the fact that these advisors would give such a man the same advice today under the same circumstances. Indeed, in the case of the bishop, there is evidence that he twice intervened personally *after the war* to block publication of what he felt to be overly laudatory accounts of the peasant's action: prudent care must be taken, he felt, lest that action be presented as a model for others to follow. To his mind, "the greater heroes" were the men who fought and died in fulfillment of their duties as citizen, even as the early Christians had fought and died in the armies of Imperial Rome.

The time demands a thorough re-assessment of the relevance of these traditional theological formulations in a world of nations no longer governed by "the Christian prince" (if, indeed, they ever were), a world which has experienced totalitarian forms of government which leave no room for the preservation of the essential rights and dignity of the human person. Of course all authority comes from God; but now that we have learned how easily the authority exercised by man can be abused and how disastrous are the effects of that abuse, we need a moral theology which would require that every exercise of this authority be exposed to the test of the enlightened moral conscience of the individual subject to it.

In a sense, such a rule is what we are already applying to Eichmann when we reject his plea—and I am sure we would reject it even if we believed it to be sincere—that he was only doing his duty and performing the tasks assigned to him by his "legitimate authority." Why, then, is it so hard to apply the same rule to the locomotive engineer and the train guards who took their orders from him? Or, today, to the scientist who is ready to create the neutron bomb and the newspaper columnist who urges his readers and the Congress to vote the funds to enable him to do so?

THE ANSWER which comes most easily to mind is, of course, the familiar escape from responsibility by reason of ignorance or, stated another way, by reason of limited access to the relevant facts. This factor cannot be denied; in fact, when we allow for the various ways in which the secular authority can and does manipulate, distort and even suppress essential facts to suit its purpose, this answer takes on added validity. Yet it should be possible to hold that, rather than furnishing an excuse for permitting the individual a *carte blanche* suspension of moral judgment, this situation merely introduces an argument for forgiveness in charity for the mistakes in judgment he can and will make because of inadequate information. It should not reduce in the least the obligation of each to seek out all the facts that are available and to form a responsible judgment on the basis of those facts.

In other words, if the citizen makes a wrong judgment because those in authority have blocked his access to the truth, then one is justified in assigning the responsibility to the ruler. But this is a far different situation from the one in which the citizen tries to shunt his own responsibility to the shoulders of the ruler as part of the "waiver" or suspension of judgment involved in the "presumption of justice" that now prevails in the recommended solution of any question of doubt.

The proposed re-formulation of the "responsibility of peoples" issue presupposes a recognition of an expanded scope of individual competence. The tone of disdain which marked Archbishop Groeber's 1935 statement in which he declared that the decision as to the justice or injustice of any given war was always left to "legitimate authority" and never entrusted to the individual "with all his shortsightedness and emotionality" must be abandoned. In its place we should develop a greater measure of respect for the human person and affirm that, with the help of the divine graces available to him, he *can be* capable of recognizing the difference between right and wrong and *should be* encouraged and inspired by his spiritual leaders to manifest these capabilities and graces in his social behavior. Again, the emphasis is important. If he "can be" but is not now capable or ready to do so, the Church must develop whatever new programs and techniques may be necessary to convert that potential into actuality. If this individual is "short-sighted" and given too much to "emotionality," it is the task of the religious community and its leaders to provide the spiritual formation and strength to enable him to broaden his scope of vision and to channel or restrain his passions. This, too, is vastly different from Groeber's solution of merely dismissing him as hopelessly incompetent and excluding him from what is probably the most crucial moral question facing mankind in the modern world.

The Austrian peasant and the countless others who met death because they could not, in conscience,

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duplicate the patterns of conformity and obedience shown by the Huesingers and the Globkes (not to mention the locomotive engineers, the train guards, and the sales representatives for the manufacturers of Cyclon B) offer undeniable proof that man is capable of developing such competence and exhibiting such responsibility. Thus the same tragic era which plumbed the depths of human depravity in the acts for which Eichmann has been brought to judgment also provides us with the hopeful vision of the heights to which the human spirit can rise. It merely remains for us to read its lesson.

AND THE lesson was spelled out for us by that same peasant in a remarkable little essay on "Irresponsibility" written in pencil on the pages of a child's notebook. In it he offered as "a little example" the hypothetical case of two men each performing substantially the same political services for the National Socialist regime. One was committed to the Movement and believed that what he did was good and just; the other rejected the Nazi ideology and its goals and policies as unjust. Yet t latter considered himself the "better" of the two becau he did not share the other's pro-Nazi point of vie It remained for this simple peasant to grasp a truth th eluded the much more highly educated Dr. Globk in his eyes, the non-Nazi actually bore a greater mea ure of guilt for his actions, for he had the full awar ness that what he did would produce more evil th good, whereas the other saw nothing wrong and actual regarded his work as the performance of a simple dut "Naturally," the peasant observed, "the words sour sweet to our ears when we are told that the respons bility is borne by others"; but, as his own subseque acts were to prove, he did not find those sweet assu ances convincing.

Seventeen years ago, as I have recalled, Dwigl Macdonald was involved in the discussion of "the r sponsibility of peoples" for a horrible war which w then about to end. It it of extreme urgency that th discussion be reopened now at a time when a far mo horrible war seems about to begin.

# Gnostics at the Garden

*NOEL E. PARMENTEL, JR.*

ALTHOUGH PUBLICLY branded a Fellow Traveler on the Right Wing, I have never really been accepted by the hard guys as one of the cadre. The problem is my inability to go all the way with the gag, to participate in the mysteries celebrated at all levels of The Movement, enabling true believers to imagine that the minute details of their gossip, chatter and in-fighting are of acute relevance to both the body politic and the human condition. This self-deception reaches a kind of crescendo twice monthly in the pages of *National Review*, (to which I am a sometime contributor and a Sunday, Monday And Always devotee).

Where else but in the *National Review* could one learn why recently, in Osaka, Japan, the wife, Pat Buckley, of the editor, Bill Buckley was moved to address him as "You ass"; or which of the editor's sisters has the best French accent; where the girls have their hair done in Paris; the latest whimsey and *nom de plume* of the editor's kid brother; the views of the editor's brother-in-law on the impeachment of Earl Warren; what four of the editor's nieces and nephews, aged six through twelve, think—in roughly 2,500 words —of the United Nations; the views of the children' mother on the care and feeding of paper boys. In ad dition to this absorbing Inside Dopester stuff on th Buckley family, one finds long editorial controversie on the perigrinations of obscure French priests, as wel as all the academic gossip and faculty politics of th Michigan State University Senate, faithfully recorde by Russell Kirk, that Samuel Pepys of East Lansing

But I speak of this auto-narcosis which afflicts th Right Wing more in sorrow than in anger. Barry Gold water and Bill Buckley are still My Kind of People, an when I received in the mail one bitter December morn ing a summons to attend (on a date which turned ou to be Ash Wednesday) a star-studded Conservative Rally for World Liberation From Communism, I made my reservations early. And just as well.

As befits my sympathizer position, I have attended helped out with, and, occasionally, if I felt flush, even sprung for a few bucks at Right Wing affairs. I have parroted the line at such *ridottos* as the Joe McCarthy Rally, the Roy Cohn Dinner, *Walpurgis* Night at Carnegie Hall and Cocktails Against Communism. I have known them all already, but I have never seen anything like Madison Square Garden at the opening of the Lenten Season. The image that comes to mind is

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J Day in Gomorrah, and the shades of Uncle Mike cobs and John Reed Kilpatric must have been kled pink.

A horse troop of New York's finest, led by as wax-ıstachioed, side-chopped a commander as ever ɔunted charge at Gallipoli, and accompanied by veral battalions of foot patrolmen, kept the peace ıong a baker's dozen of picket lines, who ranged e political spectrum. Students for Democratic Action rmed the largest, and best-humored, protesting group. ıey eventually moved on to St. Nick's Arena for a tle Do of their own, but the others persevered.

Differing opinions on the political sympathies of the ɔung Americans for Freedom were offered. The Na-ɔnal Renaissance Party dubbed the sponsors Com-unist-Fronters, while the Fair Play for Cubas favored 'oung American Fascists." Banners proclaimed Don't 'elsh on Bob: He Does Your Job; Cream Com-UNism: Walk With Walker, Don't Buckle with Buck-y; a Lumumbist group was glowering at a sign read-ıg Give Us Moise—Give Them Soapy. George Lincoln ockwell's boys, un-*waffen* for this evening, alerted me ɔ the dangers of Kosher Konservatism, while a nice ıd lady antique dealer, who had stumbled onto the ɔcret that Communists Are Poisoning Our Food, was 'illing to share it. And a good citizen slipped me a icture of Bill Buckley Casting His Ballot For A Cleaner lew York.

OME 18,000 lucky buffs mauled their way into the 'arden but there was no room at the inn for six ıousand souls outside. Although they didn't take this ving down, the cops managed to disperse them with ıinimal violence. But the jukebox strains of Midnight ı Moscow wafting over Ninth Avenue did little to as-uage those savage breasts. Inside it was equal parts f Ivy Club after the Yale game, a Legion post's Cootie Crawl and Ladies' Night at the K. of C. For eighty-five ents at the bar one could get a beer, a shrimp egg roll ınd a pickup crowd of: a Greenwich Village physician; Fulton Lewis Jr.'s ghost; one of Tough Tony Anastasia's ongshoremen; Mike Prendergast's lawyer, George Sokol-ky's secretary; a pistol-packing, teetotaling deputy heriff; a couple of ex-Communists; a *Village Voice* ıewshen; a Broadway director; a pretty girl from Mor-istown; a former N.A.M. president; and the head of he Intercollegiate Society of Individualists, who is ıbout forty-five years old.

All this conviviality ended all too soon, because YAF ıad arranged a split-second schedule and the band was already playing the National Anthem. As we got to our seats a Rabbi was delivering the invocation, and I thought of Ben Schultz. In the halcyon days of Joe McCarthy, a Right Wing hoedown without Rabbi Ben-jamin Schultz would have been as unthinkable as the Red Sox minus Ted Williams. But poor Ben violated the club rules, got put in Coventry, and was finally exiled to Brunswick, Georgia. Ted Williams is gone too. *Sic transit gloria.*

YAF national chairman Robert Schuchman opened the meeting and introduced some of the people on the platform. Mercifully, most of these settled for a bow. Some, however, seized the opportunity to run off at the mouth. A serious young man read something seriously called the Sharon Statement in tones ordinarily reserved for the Magna Carta or the Gettysburg Address. A Harvard student, who is a ringer for Marty, tipped us to the Southeast Asia League Against Communism. Somebody whispered "Who's the spade?" as the platform's lone Negro was presented. (He turned out to be columnist George Schuyler, called the Black Pegler.)

George Sokolsky, who is considered soft on Bobby Kennedy, drew the evening's first boos. Ralph de Toledano got a couple of jeers, too. (Ralph, who used to shill for Joe McCarthy, switched to Dick Nixon after an agonizing reappraisal.) But Schuchman's synchronized chronometer showed that time was dragging and he got through the remaining intros without incident. After a snappy windup, he switched to the controversial awards. And ran into his first hitch.

THESE YAF "Awards" have been hogging more national press space than the Oscars and the National Book Awards. They are also regarded by some as the worst disaster to the Right Wing since the Watkins Committee. Once formidable looking, the honors list dwindled alarmingly. General Edwin Walker, so highly rated in the winter book, was the *première* cropper. He was followed in quick succession, by Dr. Edward Teller, Senator Thomas Dodd and columnist David Lawrence. John Wayne and Herbert Hoover found that press of business would prevent them from making the scene and there is considerable doubt that Katanga's Moise Tshombe, even had he been granted a visa, would have showed.

But, while Teller, Dodd and Lawrence left what they thought was a sinking ship, Walker was pushed off the plank. The jettisoning of the General created a lot of bad feeling, and a claque of his followers started to razz Schuchman. The cry of We Want Walker did not diminish until the ringleaders were given the heave-ho.

But there were, after all, still some honorees left and the chairman proceeded to the task at hand. Among those tapped were textile magnate Roger Milliken; the distinguished economist Ludwig von Mises; Charles Edison; John Dos Passos; Senator Strom Thurmond, former Dixiecrat candidate for president; and M. Stanton Evans, brilliant young editor of the Indianapolis *News*.

There were a great many speeches. George Murphy



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representing John Wayne, promised that, unlike Bobby Kennedy, Duke would never forget the Alamo. The old hoofer also brought greetings from Roy Rogers and Dale Evans (Trigger has apparently gone Left) and promised to "deliver this to Duke in the morning." He did a fast buck and wing and cut out. Rosemary McGrath, the *La Pasionaria* of the Right Wing, said a few words and the band played "There'll be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight." Governor Edison was all for "chasing the money changers from the temples." The pretty girl from Morristown whispered to her escort, "Didn't Roosevelt say that?" "I think Jesus," he replied.

CONGRESSMAN Don Bruce, whose style is early Paul Harvey, said of Tshombe (and I must admit he lost me on this one), "this is no Pollyanna beauty contest." Strom Thurmond was hot-footing it around the platform, sedulously avoiding photographers who might catch him juxtaposed with George Schuyler and Mrs. Schuyler, an extremely white lady from Texas. (Strom was getting a hard time all around this evening. Earlier some ex-Marines in the audience had booed him. Later on he was forced to whoop it up for "The Battle Hymn of the Republic.") Marvin Liebman, house flack for the Right Wing, was also hopping around. Liebman's public relations firm handled the arrangements for the evening and some of the wits were describing the Awards mess as "Marvin's *mishigass*." Well, to be honest Injun, Marvin is just no Ivy Lee. Assorted stilettos have been out for him for some time. The platform was loaded with longknives and he had to tread carefully.

Don Bruce, who had gone over quite well with the audience, packed up his corn and sat down. This concluded the awards. But there had been some thirty speeches up to this point and the rally was way behind schedule, with the three major addresses yet to come. The audience was restive and many a patriot was headed toward the bar, or even the door. What we needed here was Bill Buckley. What we got was L. Brent Bozell.

Brent Bozell is one of the more interesting and intelligent figures on the right wing. Since the day he entered Yale, however, he has lived in the shadows of Bill Buckley. It is said that he tires of the role and has gone to some pains to translate his considerable gifts into an independent line. This was not his night. If his speech lasted twenty minutes, as promised, then he spoke about seventeen minutes too long. He was introduced as "one of America's leading Catholic laymen" and proceeded to deliver a lecture on epistemology, interspersed with adjurations to, in Havana, "make an immediate landing," in Berlin, "tear down the wall" and in the Congo, "change sides."

But the high point for me came when he alerted me to the Gnostics. I knew all about the Red Menace, and the Yellow Peril. I have even done some alerting my own about the Lavender Lapse. But I did not kno about the threat of Gnosticism. Watch out for the Gnostics. Too much. He like to emptied the hall. I hit somewhere between Jacob Burckhardt and Rom Hruska.

STILL to come were Senators John Tower, who was bad, and Barry Goldwater, who was. Plans for demo strations and hoopla, quite unlike the speeches, peter out fast, because a good many stalwarts of the Chr tian West were making tracks for the L.I.R.R. and t I.R.T. It was too late. The thrill had gone. If Gol water lost his usual sizzle, who among us could blan him. Unlike Brent Bozell, the Goldwater course on t evening steered down the middle between Claren Manion and Jacob Javits. At this juncture, one man the audience slipped on a New York Ranger butto Dr. Daniel Poling, veteran *Christian Herald* editor, ga the benediction, and Ben Schultz went unmourned, sa by me.

Where was the youth who called Roy Cohn "t American Dreyfus?" Or the swinging crowd that hoot a *Life* photographer out of this very emporium? W must right-wingers gab each other to death, and bo their friends? Whither the Right Wing if, God forbi Bill Buckley loses interest? When will a few *simpáti* Gnostics infiltrate us and get us with it?

But if I know my confreres, We Shall Not Be Move After the ball was over a young fellow who shapes u as a road company Amory Blaine invited the In Grou and a few outsiders to his house for drinks. Whe they proceeded to gossip, chatter, back-bite, go ov the latest Buckley family memorabilia, consider tenu in East Lansing and the late Father Teilhard de Cha din. So what else is new?

## *Lenten Joy*

A thin, transparent joy this day was born—
A turquoise tremor, a tiny note of spring.
And the note was caught up by birds that sing
High, clear, naked joy as they perch on the thorn.
A swift, sharp limning of emerald told
Not of growth exactly, but greening of grass;
And a twig my hem as I hurried to pass,
Like a live thing plucking itself from the mold.
Now April snow like Lenten joy descends.
In madcap joy against blue skies it glimmers;
In spendthrift joy on emerald lawn it shimmers.
Hope born of hunger early springtime lends.
With Simon-Peter-logic Lenten sparrows sing,
"Where shall we go but to the thorn? There is no oth spring."

SISTER M. DAVIDA, I.H.M



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# THE STAGE

## *A Dirty, Well-lighted Place*

'HAT IS continually surprising about Broadway is ; dogged refusal to concede that the human capacity r vulgarity has limits, that we have reached them ıd that there is simply nothing left for us to debase. ɔu would think that a state of exhaustion would have ɜen attained by now, such a weariness with untruth, nobility and devaluation that we would all want erely to sleep; so that in that sleep something funda- ental, honest and tentative—a poor new innocence— ight suggest its face to us. But they are untiring, the ılgarizers, and we have got to go on looking at the ɜath's-heads their licensed ingenuity produces.

Now a death's-head is of course an emblem, not the al thing, and this is why I find it impossible to talk ɔout "A Gift of Time" as a real work containing, or ıilt around, an actual moral problem or vision of oral existence; ostensibly it speaks of death, or death- ıd-life; it deals with suicide and the related questions responsibility and the ethics of the desire to deter- ine one's destiny up to the point of cutting it short. nd it is supposed to offer a stern but bracing wisdom this area.

But it isn't real, except as vulgarity is real; it is a ɜath's-head, a skull of a peculiarly horrifying kind, ıch as certain Mexican Indians make, although, God ıows, for very different purposes and with antipodal ffects. For it is one thing to be reminded of our neces- ıry human death, but immeasurably another to be ɜminded of the death of the imagination, of taste, .telligence, any kind of honesty, beauty, fitness, dig- ty, dramatic art (not least), true humor and true ɔurage. "A Gift of Time" is the sort of artifact that ɜeps our cultural despair mounting with every new eek.

So I have nothing to say about the theme which has ɛercised so many commentators, since it truly does not ɑist: you cannot have virtue without actuality, and ɔu cannot have vice either, which is why girlie mag- ɀines are ugly but not immoral and why best-sellers ɛe not bad art but non-art. "A Gift of Time" cannot ıake us weep—from whichever side—at its conclusion, nce all our tears have been expended before that; e have been mourning the deaths that have been put ɔrward as life all along.

Technically the play is one long agony of pseudo- aturalism, the kind with artiness smeared on like pan- ake makeup: a three-ring stage much of the time, re- ɔlving sets, sounds of birds (mournful), foghorns ditto), train whistles (ditto), real injections by ɘrisimilitudinous doctors, temperatures taken, hospital eds that crank up and down, wine that fizzes. These are the physical, or ground, vulgarities. The vulgarities of action, too numerous to mention, include middle-aged love-making on the floor (next morning, he: "It was miraculous as always, last night"), and a scene—one from which we may come to date the nadir of the commercial stage—in which the dying man pats the bottom of the most luscious blonde nurse imaginable, while his wife, that loyal partner, beams at the display of all-Rotarian, all-Indianapolis male indomitability.

*Enfin,* the vulgarities of speech. Phony, or Time-Life vernacular: "thanks for leveling with me"; "I'm so deeply goddamned sorry"; "Damn, I sure could use God right now." Cliché, or Leo McCarey faces life: "Nothing is lost that has been experienced"; "It's not the length of your life, it's the quality"; "I'd rather choose the moment than have it choose me."

But, hold! the vulgarities of speech, action and set- ting, in inextricable atrociousness. The play's epilogue. Henry Fonda is dead. Slit wrists. Olivia de Haviland with the two children. In the kitchen. Boy says where's Daddy? Gone. Not coming back. But won't we ever remember him! Boy says Yessiree, my Daddy was O.K. (or A.O.K., notes not clear). Girl not yet reconciled. Says I want my Daddy. Olivia says there, there, you and I will go and bake a nice pecan pie. Exit shining. Curtain. Low crisp sound of audience's heart breaking like peanut-brittle (pecan brittle?). (*At the Ethel Barry- more.)*

AND NOW to try to dispel the funk into which this has doubtless put us all. For the seed dwells beneath the snow, the fires are not all out . . . I was not in New York when "3 x 3"—subtitled "An Evening of Comedy"—opened, and it closed before I returned, having been deemed by the dailies, unanimously, I gathered, not to have been an evening of comedy. I cannot say what Arnold Weinstein's "The Twenty-five Cent White Cap" or Elaine May's "Not Enough Rope" were like, but "George Washington Crossing the Dela- ware," by Kenneth Koch, which I saw at a special per- formance was, or is, the funniest play I have seen this year.

I have a feeling it's the funniest play by an American in a lot longer than that. Oh, and a very indigenous play, one about which Birchers and beats can agree, or at least break bread at. For while it is a parody, or set of interlocking parodies, the purest kind of fan- tastic innocence—such as probably prevailed at the birth of our nation and such as still prevails on the level of presentation at high-school patriotic pageants —continually warms the scene, that decor of cut-out boats, horses and guns and those costumes of splendid sashiness, tri-corned *élan* and big-buttoned spirit-of-76 which Alex Katz has designed so brilliantly.

You see Koch really loves George Washington, the way we are supposed to but can't until all the par-



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odiable elements are worked through and burned away. The play is the recovery of a childlike vision of American origins and one strain of our persisting reality, the child having been helped to see freshly through the sharp wits and memory for eras of language of the adult looking over his shoulder, the one who prompts the actors to mock-Shakespeare, the diction of masques, melodrama, Barbara Frietchie, cigarette ads, Max Lerner and Fulton Lewis, Jr. And the distortion that emerges, the verbal and visual minor miracle, is of the order of Picasso's women, truer than the mirror, or of Kafka or Beckett when their language moves into the most uncomplicated yet primally mysterious play.

So then, if you want to hear Cornwallis say wonderingly of the father of our country that "he walks as he rides!" or of the British cause that "love makes it right," if you want to hear the Redcoats pray "If only we could win him over to our side!" and hear George himself declare that "We have nothing to fear but death" and then settle back for a nap with a murmured "Goodnight America," if you want to see "democracy in action . . . actuality exemplified in a military situation"—I strongly urge you to cross the Delaware, or whatever river separates you from the play, if, as I hope, the current attempt to bring it back (coupled with a Saroyan play, I hear) succeeds. No better investment around at any price. *(At the Maidman?)* RICHARD GILMAN

# THE SCREEN

## *Confused Reflections in A Mirror*

IT WAS inevitable that the Swedes, with their ardent admiration for the plays of Eugene O'Neill, should come up with a movie that most resembles O'Neill. And it was most likely that Sweden's greatest film maker should make it. Ingmar Bergman's tortured and spell-binding "Through a Glass Darkly" (Janus) will remind many a viewer of O'Neill's tortured and spell-binding "Long Day's Journey into The Night." Both show a family of four during a span of twenty-four hours when they are confronted with a crisis that affects them individually, as a group, and in their relations to each other. In both cases the crisis is sparked by suffering and mental breakdown.

Perhaps it is unfair at this point to compare the Bergman film, which director-writer Bergman calls his "opus number one," with the O'Neill play which is in the process of being filmed right now with an outstanding cast. But it must be said in favor of "Through a Glass Darkly" that it is extremely well paced, and it moves with almost relentless speed to a conclusion that is upbeat in spite of its harrowing tale. If one may be permitted to disagree with the Swedish master, should like to make it clear that I don't consider hi twenty-three earlier pictures "only études" as he re cently called them.

It is an amazing movie—sparsely written by Bergman and superbly directed by him so that the visuals and Sven Nykvist's handsome, almost sunless black-and white photography match the somber story. From the late afternoon opening scene, when its four characters emerge from their swim in the Baltic to hurry to their dinner on the island where the family is spending their summer holiday, the picture builds up a tension that is nearly unbearable. Bit by bit as the day and the scenes move on, we learn the facts about these four; and so well are the roles written and performed that we find ourselves enmeshed in the family.

As Karin, the daughter, Harriet Andersson gives a haunting portrayal of a mentally ill woman who is longing for love but cannot face reality. She realizes she is turning from her husband; and her father, who is away most of the time, seems disinterested. After learning through her father's diary that her schizophrenia is perhaps hopeless, she confides in her teenage brother and takes him to her secret room in the attic where "one day God will come through the door."

Karin is the focus of the story but not necessarily the main character. Equally important, and also very well acted, are the three males around her. Gunnar Bjornstrand is quite moving as the self-centered father, a writer who is willing to watch analytically the steps of his daughter's descent into insanity. He yearns to love both his son and daughter, but he doesn't know how; so he keeps running away from them. Also inadequate in his efforts to help Karin is her husband (Max von Sydow), a doctor whose love seems to have no depth and who is even accused by the father of wishing for Karin's death. Most involved in Karin's breakdown is her brother (played with remarkable skill by young Lars Passgard) who is going through a difficult, lonely adolescence, both intrigued and disgusted by the opposite sex. If ever a young fellow needed the love and guidance of a father it is he when Karin goes berserk and incestuously misuses him in the filthy bilge of an old boat.

"Through a Glass Darkly" is one of the most carefully planned of Ingmar Bergman's films. The Bach music used throughout, the island's stony, bleak locale, the cloudy sky, the stark-white lighthouse with its wailing fog horn all contribute to the stirring whole. Scene after scene arranged in counterpoint with four, three or two characters—or one—contribute as well. The most moving of these is between father and daughter after her collapse when she insists she wants to be put away permanently. She admits what she did to her brother; and the father admits his neglect of his children.



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But equally impressive are the scenes in which Karin and her husband pack before leaving and discuss trivia; or when the quite mad Karin confronts her family after her last visit to her secret room and insists that God finally came through the door and was a spider. It is the finale, however, that sums up the picture. The father and disturbed son are left alone. The boy will recover from his traumatic experience helped by his father who answers his questions about God with, "We cannot know whether love proves the existence of God or whether love itself is God."

INGMAR BERGMAN, whose "Through a Glass Darkly" is the first of a planned trilogy concerned with religion, says that this film represents the youthful aspects of the over-all theme. If this is so, then Tennessee Williams's "Sweet Bird of Youth" is best summed up in the quote from Hart Crane—about a "Relentless caper for all those who step the legend of their youth into the noon." It is mainly concerned with two people—a fading Hollywood star who turned to drugs and sex because she thought her aging face couldn't stand glaring lights and the camera's realism, and a young man whose dissipation and mean climb to success have aged him far beyond his years. The two have joined forces and hope to use each other. They probably deserve each other, but as the actress says, "When monster meets monster, one monster has to give way—and it won't be me."

Although I liked the New York stage version of Williams's play better than the movie, I must say that scriptwriter Richard Brooks has done admirably well in turning "Sweet Bird of Youth" (M.G.M.) into a movie. And director Brooks has also done well in getting action and movement into a play that depends essentially on characterization. Actually it isn't quite cricket for me to compare the play and movie—mainly because Williams himself did a most unusual thing after the play finished its Broadway run and tour on the road. He re-wrote it. No doubt Brooks based his film script on the re-written play.

Once again Geraldine Page gives a magnificent performance as the aging star who's running from reality. And once again Paul Newman is very effective as the anxious young man who has little to sell other than his good looks and build. He brings her to the Gulf Coast town where he was born and where he left his boyhood sweetheart (Shirley Knight) at the insistence of her father who runs the town. In a picture that probably has the largest collection of disreputable people ever gathered into one script, Ed Begley makes Boss Finley the most villainous villain ever to turn up in a movie.

The film has softened somewhat the character of the man played by Newman—not much, but enough to give some reason for his ambitions. It also gives some sense to the movie's so-called happy ending that unites this young man with the girl he left behind. I find this ending dubiously happy. "Sweet Bird of Youth" deserves to be seen—if only for the first-rate performance of Geraldine Page. But what I missed most of all in the movie is the play's final speech which Paul Newman gave talking right to the audience, "I don't ask for your pity, but just for your understanding—not even that! No—just for your recognition of me in you, and the enemy, time, in us all."

PHILIP T. HARTUNG

## *Sixteenth Autumn of the Bomb*

We move down aisles of doom.
Summer has the last drab flowers
For mourners
And brown leaves tremble.

Below the harsh jazz of starlings
A gray squirrel
Bares the enigmatic grin
Of failing swimmers

*The bombs, they say, are now*
*The size of suitcases.*

That Old Man who mumbles to himself,
What does he say?
And why does my skin crawl
At the sight of new stars?

We picnicked in the park at twilight,
Above the bandshell.
Jets punctured the sky
And all the air ran out.

*The advantage of a lightweight mobile bomb,*
*Of course, is obvious.*

I would consult the porpoises
But they disdain.
Is there perhaps a hint hidden
In the entrails of small animals?

It is incredible that elevators rise.
Even in the cooler suburbs
A premonitory hush
Pervades the ritual of cocktails.

Women, be men!
Sons, disinherit your fathers!
Only great sounds carry
From the street to the ministries.

Our Church is the world now.

RICHARD ELLISON



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# *The Church's Only Lasting Victories*

*Religious History of Modern France. By Adrien Dansette. Herder and Herder. Two Volumes. $16.50.*

*by John Ratté*

MONTALEMBERT, the great nineteenth century Catholic liberal, said at Malines in 1863: "I have hardly met with anything but setbacks. Nevertheless, for the efforts of Catholic liberals from the time of Chateaubriand to our own day, I would make the claim that was made for the Crusades. Individually, each one has failed. Taken as a whole, they succeeded." M. Dansette echoes Montalembert's premature sentiment when he writes, "The Catholic liberals . . . were responsible for the Church's only lasting victories" in the period dating from the French Revolution.

M. Dansette's magisterial and truly exciting presentation of the complex religious history of France in the modern world, now translated and published in two handsomely bound volumes, is much more than a national religious history. It is a comprehensive study of the intellectual struggle of the Church with modern society. In it, the destruction of the Gallican Church and the triumph of Ultramontanism in France is considered in its relationship to the whole of the Catholic Church in the West.

Although the two volumes are organized chronologically, M. Dansette does not hesitate to review the material he has presented at various intervals. Thus the reader, who might otherwise become lost in the profusion of Concordats, educational reforms and electoral revolutions, is able to extract from the complexities of French political history the essential drama of the Church rebuilding itself after the defeats of the Enlightenment and the Revolution; a drama which shows the Church slowly moving toward a position of leadership as a social force in this post-Marxist world.

M. Dansette sees four great crises in the process of conciliation between the Church and modern society. After surveying the Revolutionary attack on the Church, the establishment of the Constitutional Church and clergy, the beginnings of the new religions of humanity which were to be such a distinctive mark of the 19th century, the re-establishment of the Church under Napoleon and the Restored Monarchy, he devotes several brilliant chapters to the drama of Lamennais and the origins of Catholic liberalism.

Lamennais hoped to reconcile the Church and modern society by leaving each free in its own sphere of activity: "A Free Church in a Free State" was his motto. Building on the ultramontanism of Joseph de Maistre, who had foreseen a revival of the Church if its members would turn from their national concerns to the Pope "beyond the mountains," Lamennais called upon the Pope to lead the people into a realm of social justice.

Lamennais' efforts were doomed to failure, and his thinking came increasingly to make religion a subsidiary of social reform and human progress. But M. Dansette, whose admiration for Lamennais's dream leads him to write, "The two great visionaries of the 19th century were Karl Marx in the social field and Lamennais in the religious," sees in the French priest's failure the germs of the social encyclicals of Leo XIII, Pius XI, and we may add today, John XXIII.

The second attempt, which was centered around the revolutions of 1848 and the person of the new "liberal" Pope, Pius IX, also failed. Pio Nono, who, at the time of his accession, was toasted in the dining halls of Oxford as the new savior of Europe, was brutally disillusioned in the possibilities of republican reform by the assassination of his minister, Rossi. His reaction extended beyond political matters to a condemnation of the philosophical bases of modern society—that is to say, when these philosophical ideas were accepted as absolutes.

The third and fourth attempts focus upon the "rallying" to the Third French Republic which Leo XIII championed. But the essential intellectual content of this period, from 1875, roughly, to World War I, is to be found in the attempts of the Catholic Modernists, both orthodox and heterodox, to explain and interpret the doctrinal content of Catholicism to an intellectual world fascinated by evolutionary theories, the new scientific history, the study of human psychology, and the irrepressible forces of democracy, socialism, and communism. In his discussion of the Modernists, their Integrist opponents, the intellectual revival in France which produced the Maritains, Péguy, etc., and especially in the condemnation of the *Action Française,* Dansette uses new materials, and makes the second volume as successful for its detailed analyses of ideas and politics as the first volume is as a survey of a better known and more thoroughly studied period.

This is a classic study. Although M. Dansette writes as a liberal, his judgments are always reasoned and moderately expressed. Those who remain critical of the Church's failure in the nineteenth century to cope with modern science and modern social movements will gain from these books a sobering understanding of the immense work of reconstruction in internal organization and clerical and lay education which the Church faced after the Revolution. It was a work which demanded alliances now with the forces of reaction, now with the parliamentary republicanism of the wealthy middle class, now with the authoritarian state.

The critic will be able to understand better how essential it was that this work should be completed before anything new could begin. However magnificent the opportunities for conciliation—Lamennais, 1848, and the various intellectual breakthroughs which are grouped under the term Modernism—may seem to have presented at the time, each would have torn the fabric of the Church before that fabric had grown strong enough to take into its weave the lines and colors of the future.



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## *Of Blood and Iron*

*The Fox in The Attic. By Richard Hughes. Harper. $4.50.*

*by Edwin Kennebeck*

"IN ENGLAND the ending of the war had come like waking from a bad dream: in defeated Germany, as the signal for deeper levels of nightmare." *The Fox in The Attic,* Richard Hughes' first installment of a long novel of his times, begins in 1923 as a kind of diptych—England in one panel, Germany in the other—which illustrates another division, stated by Bismarck in the previous century: "The great questions of the day will not be settled by resolutions and majority vote . . . but by blood and iron."

Hughes' central character, Augustine Penry-Herbert, is, like the author, just as old as the century. Not caring to become involved in national life, whether it be waking from a dream or writhing with nightmares, Augustine departs from the England of resolutions and votes to visit some distantly related cousins near Munich, where he gradually senses that, only five years after the "death" of Germany, the blood and iron are already in preparation.

It takes Augustine some time to realize this because he is not much interested in the curious preoccupations of his Army-officer hosts. He is bored by the talk of the Bolshevik menace and the hated Weimar Republic; he doesn't understand or care why a servant in a Munich hotel should give him millions of marks for his ten-shilling note. He is scarcely aware of the meaning of the abortive *Putsch* of November 1923.

But he is not an insensitive man; soon after cousin Walther has met his train, he sees Walther's two little girls take a nasty little fall on their sled, and watches with alarm as they stiffen under the sharp, mocking shout of their father. (Back in England his own six-year-old niece had bounded from her bathtub to greet him, with only affectionate grumblings from her nurse for comment.) He is deeply stricken with love for Walther's older daughter Mitzi, who is going blind. And finally he realizes that he is not going to find the kind of "new Germany" he had expected.

Richard Hughes personalizes these moments in history with remarkable vividness and pace, ranging boldly away from his central character to tell us what is going on in the minds of others. A funny old coroner in Wales gets drunk and tries to tease the bishop at a banquet. The hyper-emotional wife of a nearly fanatical English minister of religion tries to rationalize the accidental death of their little girl. A young man who lives in a castle attic in Germany, quite insane from the horrors he endured in the local Baltic wars after 1918, plots murder for the sake of the fatherland. His brother, who works in a Munich hotel, spends his spare time in a gymnasium, proud to belong to "a noble sodality, the very flower of German youth." We even look in on the mind of Adolf Hitler, hiding from the police after the November fiasco—the Hitler who is on the verge of writing *Mein Kampf.*

Hughes, when he chooses to be, is a master of indirection. Not for him an opening sentence that says, "Augustine was planning to visit his German cousins." No, we start with the "steady creaking" of swans as they fly out toward the sea, and a man (who turns out to be Augustine) carrying a dead child. A few pages later, as Augustine stands in the billiard room of his large manor in Wales and muses over the uncles from whom he had inherited the place—because the primary heir had been killed in the war—we learn in casual parenthesis that Augustine's sister had visited the German cousins ten years before. Then the matter is dropped until Hughes sees fit to pick up that thread and weave it in again *naturally;* all of which is to say that we have a book by that rare type, a man who recognizes novel-writing as an art. Whatever else he is up to, we know that he is especially concerned with constructing a novel.

But we might question the master constructor on at least two points. Why does he allow himself to intrude, now and then, with little essays on the nature of self and nationality? His comments are interesting; primitive man, he says, knows that "there is always some overspill of self into penumbral regions . . . He accepts as naturally as the birds and beasts do his union with part of his environment. . . ." This is to lead later to an explanation of the madness of Hitler: "The universe contained no other persons than him, only things." He was "an ego without a penumbra." But Hughes also develops a "we-they" theory, valid enough but not particularly original, which causes a break in the flow of images—something that could possibly have been worked more solidly into one of the character's point of view.

A second criticism is that our central point of interest, Augustine, remains dimmer than most of the other characters. This may be only a relative matter, attesting to the clarity of the others; but it keeps the story from being firmly based; the effect is a little like that of a family portrait in which Father's face hasn't been filled in.

The reasons for this may have to do with Hughes' plans for the future volumes; as we read *The Fox in the Attic* we can strongly feel the pull of the sequels. Hitler is arrested and must bide his time; a little English boy named Sylvanus, whom his mother subconsciously blames for the deaths of both his sister and his father, must, presumably, grow up and watch World War II overtake his adolescence; Augustine, not having spoken for his beloved Mitzi in time to prevent her being packed off to a convent (what good is a blind girl to the new Germany?), must flee from that insane land.

But despite an occasional falter, this first installment promises a skillful, compelling nightmare-tale of blood and iron calling down blood and iron upon themselves.

## *Fromm's Act of Faith*

*May Man Prevail? By Erich Fromm. Doubleday. $3.50.*

*by Daniel M. Friedenberg*

MR. ERICH FROMM, the noted psychoanalyst and apostle of a humanized Marx, has written a pas-



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sionate plea for sanity in the nuclear age. Fromm's *May Man Prevail?* is a study of American and Russian relations which attempts to cut beneath what the author considers the myths on both sides to arrive at a basis upon which universal disarmament and peace may be founded.

Mr. Fromm first discusses the "fictions" of foreign policy. United States attitudes, in his thought, are dominated by a series of clichés. The most important of these is the conviction that the Russians want to conquer the world for revolutionary communism. Another is that Soviet philosophy has imposed atheism and a new concept of morality on the people of Russia. A third is that the best defense against a policy of force is counter-force.

But the "facts" of foreign policy are quite different, the author is convinced. Russia is a managerial and conservative police state whose revolutionary ideology is only a rationale to cover her desire for a stable *status quo*. The Communist chiefs fear German unification and rearmament more than American capitalism. The Soviet party is most terrified of China becoming head of a revolutionary bloc of truly aggressive states. And thus peace would be possible if only the United States would understand the tensions under which the ruling elite of Russia operate and accommodate accordingly.

It is a tribute to Mr. Fromm's humanity that he wants peace so badly he is willing to give the benefit of the doubt to every Russian position. But the sum total of the arguments is unconvincing. One is reminded of the story concerning Heinrich Mann. This novelist, who before World War I was more famous than his brother Thomas, had been a Communist for many years and had followed the tortuous Stalinist line with absolute fidelity. When Russia and Germany signed their pact in 1939, the exiled Germans were called to a meeting by the Comintern. The 'new line" was explained while the men sat around a marble table. There was silence when the Russian delegate concluded. Then Heinrich Mann got up.

"You have been explaining the line to me for years" he said, "and I always managed to believe you. But when I am told that this marble table is a fish pool and the colors in the marble goldfish, then I can believe no more."

Many of the arguments Mr. Fromm uses are goldfish of the species 1961. Russia is threatened "by the growing onslaught of the underdeveloped countries under China's leadership." The neutral countries are attracted by "democratic, decentralized socialism," represented, among others, by those humanists Tito and Nasser. The Cuban Communist Party was held in contempt by Castro and "Castro was never a Communist." When the Communist catechism says "Communism will be victorious all over the world" or Khrushchev states "We will bury you" this does not imply that the Soviet Union believes in force or subversion; and indeed, Khrushchev's policy is "evolutionary, non-aggressive."

In fact, "The Soviet Union's policy is strategically speaking a defensive


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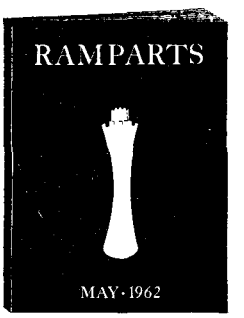


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one." We are told by fiat that "Germany is already the strongest military power in Europe," that Germans are wrong to want a reunified country and that Germany is the great threat to world peace. Though Mr. Fromm wants universal disarmament, he asserts that arms control "is part of a theory of armament, not of disarmament."

Perhaps it is unfair to take sentences out of context. But these quotations are typical of the theme. At bottom, Mr. Fromm has deposited an act of faith, namely that if the United States would neutralize West Germany, give China long-term credits and submit to disarmament without inspection and controls, then Russia would be happy to live in peace with the West. But the author is not content to accept this as an act of faith, but must *prove* that his position is correct. Since the evidence is at best most dubious, he has to juggle the facts.

One might even say that Mr. Fromm is repeating in politics his private profession; as a psychoanalyst, he is embroidering his faith (Freud) in what he considers science (Freudian hypotheses). If we do not accept his "sane" premises, we are told that our thinking is "pathologic." And the learned analyst has a bad habit of attributing not merely pathology to those who disagree; he revels in name calling; his opponents are suffering from "illusion . . . fantasy . . . demagogy . . . naivety . . . paranoid thinking. . . ."

Disregarding the polemic cast and strained rationalizations, much of value is embedded in *May Man Prevail?*. It is always useful to see the world through the eyes of one who refuses to accept prevailing thought. Erich Fromm is deeply concerned with the dehumanization implied by the acceptance of the possibility of nuclear war. The pages that analyze the psychological background of Herman Kahn's *On Thermonuclear War* are certainly the most passionate in the book.

It serves well to be reminded again and again that it was Germany which twice invaded Russia in our lifetime, inflicting frightful loss of life on the Russian people. The author is correct in pointing out that certain Soviet tactics are a result of pressures from China. And Mr. Fromm is anti-Communist in the best way, starting from the idea of spiritual degradation under a total state principle rather than playing a statistical game with automobiles and refrigerators. Actually, Dr. Fromm's approach resembles in many ways that of many leaders of the new African and Asian nations. In their view, Russia practices only a very limited form of imperialism in Eastern Europe since she is concerned with her own security. But whatever position America takes, it is viewed as imperialist and anti-progressive.

This reviewer happens to agree with some of Mr. Fromm's presuppositions. Yet *May Man Prevail?* is irritating since its author resolves serious problems and contradictions too easily. He has a glib quality, a superficial integration of psychology, history and politics, which disqualifies him as a profoundly original thinker. But only time will tell whether his basic act of faith—as distinguished from the facile arguments he uses to support it—will be justified by future events.

REVIEWERS

John Ratté is a member of the history department at Harvard University. This is his second appearance in The Commonweal.

Edwin Kennebeck, a regular reviewer, is on the staff of a leading New York publishing house.

Daniel M. Friedenberg is a frequent contributor of articles and reviews.

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## Correspondence

(Continued from Page 2)

when he reads out of a book toward the wall, performs a few gyrations and busies himself with a golden cup?"

Why do so many American Catholics choose to tell this to a French priest? Maybe as an homage to the European liturgical movement, or because they have found in their parish priests too much of this "conservatism" that Father Reinhold depicts as unjustified and spurious.

Anyway, after six visits to your country, I can say that many Catholics are ready to adopt with enthusiasm the reforms promoted by the Holy See, despite the "few pockets of resistance." Too often, isn't this resistance passive, made of a lack of information, and an easy acceptance of the famous posture of laymen at Mass: "on his knees, the right hand holding his rosary, and in his left a collection envelope"!

May many journals like The Commonweal convince American priests (and especially pastors) that the harvest is at hand; they will be helped by all these Catholics who are thrilled by the participation of the congregations here.

"With patience and tenacity," Father Reinhold writes: with confidence, I'll add, for the victory will be easier than many think.

(Abbe) F. L. Dupire

*HINDU STARGAZERS*

La Crescenta, Calif.

TO THE EDITORS: Your whimsical editorial [Feb. 16] on the Hindu astrologers' appeal to *Khetu* as the savior from their predicted catastrophes sounds a little thin to one who is constantly exposed to the agnostic mind.

Of course you and I know that there's all the difference in the universe between a celestial body that can't be discerned and the illimitable, invisible presence of our heavenly Father; but to the agnostic it will look a good deal like the Pop calling the Khetu black.

I swear that line was the end point, not the beginning of this train of thought.

But lately I have been warning my agnostic friends of how they are doomed to spend their purgatory—waiting to say, "I'll be damned," but not daring to. Leon Lukaszewski

*A REQUEST*

London

TO THE EDITORS: This April *The Wind and the Rain* is coming to life as an Easter Book. Apart from poems, stories and articles, there will be a hundred-page section devoted to the writings and influence of Teilhard de Chardin.

Future Easter Books will include special sections devoted to such subjects as "The Infant Prodigy" and "Brainwashing." I am anxious to hear from writers who have studied either subject, as well as from those who may have been or met infant prodigies themselves, or who may have undergone any form of brainwashing—political, social or religious.

Neville Braybrooke
10 Gardnor Road
London N.W. 3


**PROBLEM:** *Russia*

**EXPERT:** *Father Bissonnette*

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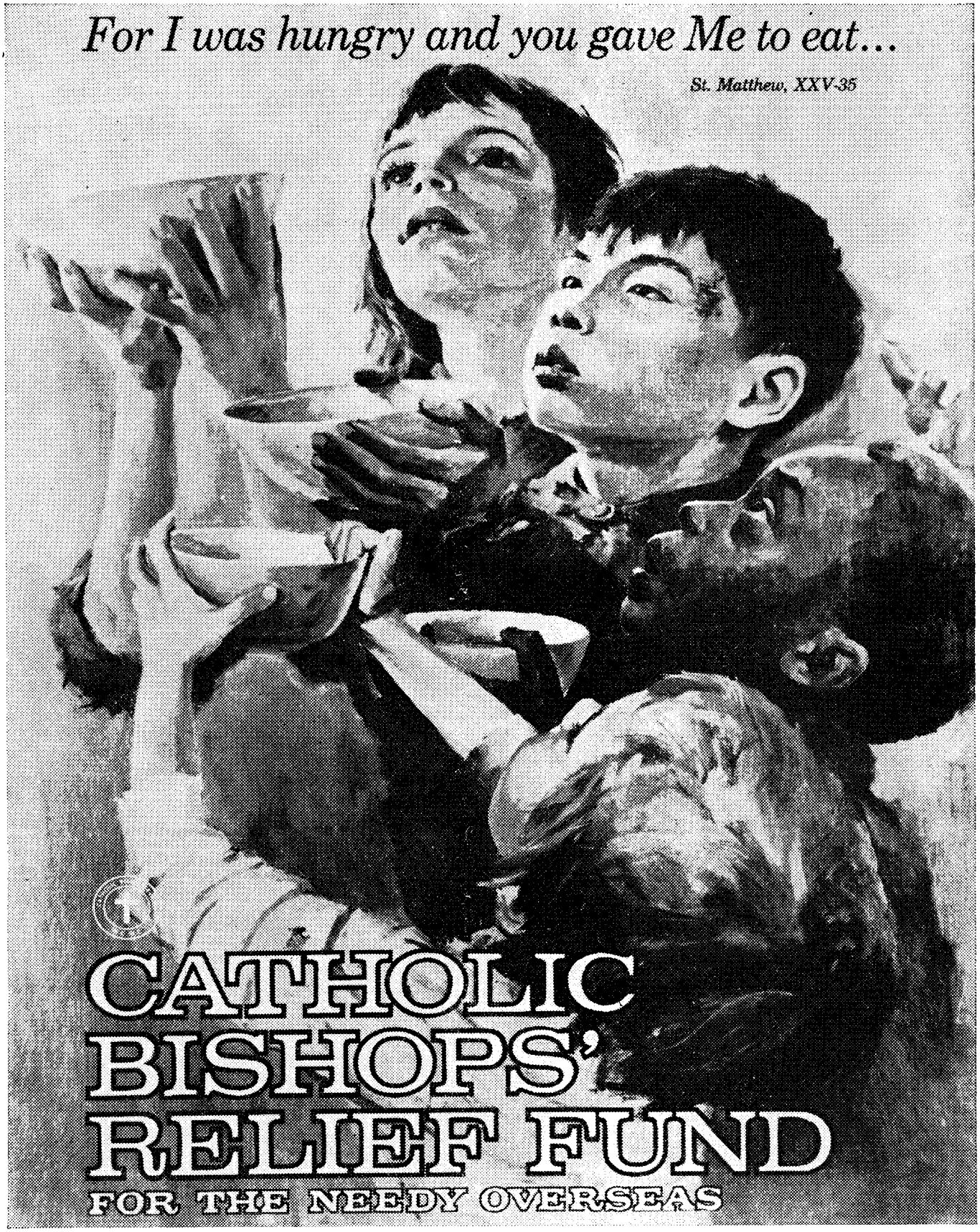


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